

Notes and Quotes

from the world of sport

by Denis Gibbons



Acton fans can thank a pair of grey-haired rookies for engineering the successful return of junior hockey to town. For although the pair may have grey hair, there's a lot of grey matter underneath it and when it comes to hockey experience both are a long way from being greenhorns.

Sabre president Kerwin McPhail and manager Bob Marshall came up through the hockey school of hard knocks and as a result neither batted an eyelash, when many of those they recruited to help organize a team, decided to throw in the towel, after only a couple of meetings last spring.

There was a point last April, when junior hockey's chances of making a comeback, not only for the 71-72 season, but for the next 10 years seemed very remote. Early enthusiasm among organizers dwindled, after a few "doubting Thomases" maintained there weren't enough fans, funds or players in town to support a junior hockey team.

Almost a year to the day later than what could well be labelled the turning point of junior hockey's return, Kerwin McPhail and Bob Marshall were accepting the trophy destined



KERWIN McPHAIL BOB MARSHALL

Surprised Sabre rookie award winners.

for the team's rookie of the year, but justifiably awarded to them by coach Bill Dawkins and assistant coach John Goy Jr.

Not only have they proven Acton can support junior hockey, they've also shown skeptics a team can be organized and organized well, with the help of a lot of hard work and the use of some common sense and diplomacy in the right places.

Sabres trailed four of the South Central league's six teams in the final standings, but from an organizational point of view Acton were unquestionably the league leaders.

Together with Harold Speaker, who unfortunately resigned from the team executive later, Kerwin and Bob were chiefly responsible for the birth of not only the Sabres, but the entire South Central league.

It was the Acton executive's close contact with O.H.A. secretary-manager Bill Hanley and convener Bill Church that resulted in the formation of the new league.

Schomberg officials are welcoming a large saving in travelling expenses, because of the relative proximity of the six towns. Last year the Cougars spent \$1500 on travelling alone in the eastern Ontario loop.

Recruitment of key personnel like Bill Dawkins, John Goy Jr. and secretary-treasurer June Gerth added a lot of class to the Sabre operation.

Coach Dawkins came in for public criticism over his use of lines and choice of goaltenders for crucial games, but the one thing he and his assistant could not be accused of was lack of dedication. Both spent countless hours talking to prospects and mapping out strategy, besides working with players at practice.

The team's failure to make the playoffs can be attributed chiefly to lack of depth and some early season overzealousness that led to an unnecessary total of 437 minutes in penalties for the first half of the season and a sub-par 6-9 record. In the second half, Sabres cut their time in the sin bin by more than half and posted a respectable 8-6-1 mark.

As far as player talent goes, Sabres had lots of quality, but lacked quantity. There wasn't a better player in the league than scoring champ Ray Evans. Ted Harmer and Randy Weldon would certainly rank as two of the league's better defencemen and five other Sabres, Bill Field, George McPhail, Dale Fisher, Gary Turkosz and Pete Morrison were among the top 20 scorers.

Statistics show that six players accounted for over 75 percent of the Acton goals however, which points up the fact the locals were about two or three good players short of becoming a contender for league honors.

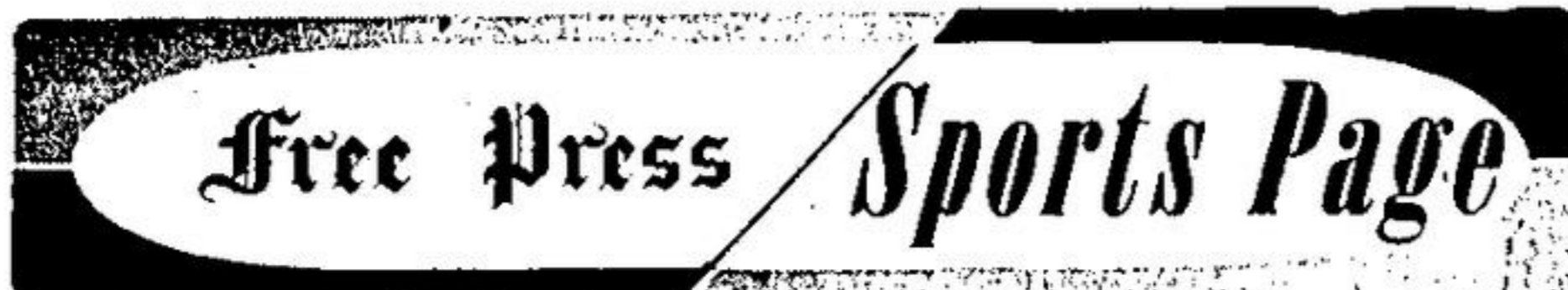
Fergus were obviously the class of the league, as their 21-6-3 record and domination of the group playoffs prove, but only eight points separated the second place Alliston Hornets and the fifth place Sabres.

Anybody who expected an overnight miracle may have been disappointed, when the Sabre season came to an abrupt end in February, but those who were close to the situation at the crucial stage last spring are grateful Acton even had a team, let alone one with such a fine organization behind it.

The class which accompanied the whole Sabre operation, including the production of an outstanding hockey program and the staging of Friday night's enjoyable banquet and social evening, impressed fans around the league, as well as many local hockey oldtimers like Sonny Townsley and Harry "Duke" Arbic, whose thoughts Friday night turned back to successful years gone by.



THE HANDSOME Fisher Memorial Trophy was a real armful for Sabre defenceman Ted Harmer, who was selected the player best combining attitude, sportsmanship and ability. Bessie Fisher made the presentation Friday night. Looking on is assistant coach John Goy Jr. (Photo by D. Gibbons)



At Sabre dinner

Vet hockey execs join rookie ranks

A pair of grey-haired rookies were honored Friday night, as Acton Sabres wound up their inaugural season of O.H.A. Junior "D" hockey competition with a banquet, trophy presentation and dance at the Legion.

Sabre manager Bob Marshall and team president Kerwin McPhail, a pair of hockey buffs, whose association with local clubs dates back to Tanner and Junior Redmen championship years, were surprise co-winners of Sabre rookie of the year award, one of seven individual trophies handed out.

Coach Bill Dawkins and his assistant John Goy Jr. made the presentation to the two men, who along with Harold Speaker spearheaded the drive to organize a junior team last spring. Mr. Speaker later resigned from the executive.

Six players were eligible for the award, but their performance was so equal that selectors were unable to settle on a single winner. Dawkins and Goy subsequently came up with the idea of making a joint award to the men, who had the most to do with the success of the club enjoyed in its inaugural season.

Six different players shared the half dozen other individual awards up for grabs.

Team captain Ray Evans, who led the South Central league in scoring with 34 goals and 48 assists in 30 games was named most valuable player. Evans received the Molson Award from

company representative Paul Cates, a former Hamilton Red Wing junior star.

Bessie Fisher presented the Fisher Memorial Trophy to defenceman Ted Harmer, who was named the player best combining attitude, sportsmanship and ability. The trophy was donated by the Fisher family in memory of Gerald Fisher, an ardent supporter of Acton hockey teams, before his death.

Top grad Dale Fisher accepted the Basil Mellon Memorial Trophy from Acton Minor Hockey president Lindsay. The trophy donated to minor hockey by the Mellon family, in memory of Basil "Fuzzy" Mellon a well-known Acton sportsman, goes to the outstanding first year graduate of Acton minor hockey.

Most gentlemanly player on the team, defenceman Brad Timbers received the Lady Gerth Trophy from Sabre secretary-treasurer June Gerth, the only staff member of the team's executive. The award is similar to the NHL's Lady Byng Trophy. It was named in honor of Mrs. Gerth.

President Kerwin McPhail presented the President's Trophy to the team's top defenceman Randy Weldon and manager Bob Marshall presented a trophy for the most improved player to John Sheppard.

John Goy Sr. emceed the program, which followed a smorgasbord dinner for players, girl friends, executive members,

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Georgetown wins title

The victory celebration extended into the wee hours of Saturday morning in Georgetown, after the home-town Raiders returned from Durham with the O.H.A. Intermediate "A" championship trophy.

Raiders blanked Durham 1-0 on a first period goal by Al Stitt to wrap up the best of seven final series in four straight games. Georgetown enjoyed a wide margin in shots on goal, but Durham goalie Gord Becker was unbeatable, except for Stitt's shot.

Over 200 Georgetown fans made the trip to Durham Friday night. Many of them followed the fire truck around town in a victory parade, when they returned.

Georgetown had to come from behind to record a 5-2 win in last

Wednesday's third game. Huskies led 2-0 early in the second period.

Although they finished only fourth in the seven team Niagara district league, Raiders upset the first and second place teams, Brantford and Welland to win their group title, before meeting Durham.

It was the first Intermediate "A" championship for Georgetown, since 1957. Raiders won the "B" crown against Thorold in 1959.

The championship was the fourth in provincial competition for Raider coach Jerry Ingalls. Ingalls previously guided Georgetown midgets to O.M.H.A. titles in 1964 and 1965 and the junior Raiders to the O.H.A. Junior "C" championship in 1968.

McNabb heads junior Rams

John McNabb was named to succeed Howard Dwyer as president of the Acton Ram junior lacrosse team at the club's election of officers.

Rounding out the list of officers are vice-president Alan Hall, secretary Ron McKnight and treasurer Del Cook.

Directors are Howard Dwyer, Gus Holmes, John Arnold, John Goy Jr., Bill Cook and Clarence Hill.

Mr. Dwyer has served as team president, since Rams entered O.I.A. Junior competition in 1970.



JOHN McNABB
New Ram president

Rockwood Seniors to start workouts

Rockwood Seniors expect to begin workouts for the upcoming intercounty football season the first week of May.

John Salmon reports most of last year's league championship club will be back again, along with former Rockwood shortstop Norm Beattie, Colin Clark of Eden Mills and possibly south-paw pitcher Blake Hind, another former Rockwood player.

Beattie spent last season with the Guelph Ingrams of the Inter-City league, while Hind hurled for the Acton Pete's Barber Shop Intercounty entry.

Positions on the team are still wide open however and anyone in the Rockwood area interested in

trying out should contact John Salmon at 856-9825.

The intercounty schedule is expected to begin May 29. Rockwood have already filed an entry for the post-season OASA playoffs. Last year the villagers made it to the Intermediate "C" finals, before losing to Merlin.

Cheltenham wins Int. "C" title

Cheltenham Harvesters have captured the O.H.A. Intermediate "C" championship for the first time.

Harvesters edged Fenelon Falls 7-5 Sunday night to win the best of seven final series four games to two.

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